

Media Training

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US Army Corps of Engineers
BUILDING STRONG®



MEDIA TRAINING

Maximum Disclosure – Minimum Delay



"We need to tell the factual story – good or bad – before others seed the media with disinformation, as they most certainly will."

Donald Rumsfeld
Former Secretary of Defense



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Media's View of Us

Reactive

Too Slow

Bureaucratic

Inaccessible

Biased



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True or False?

Reporters are out to get you? **False!**

Reporters seek controversy? **True!**

Reporters love sensationalism? **False!**

TV reporters oversimplify? **True!**

Reporters use editing tricks to make you look bad? **False!**

Reporters will let you ramble? **True!**



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*“Who has
questions
for my
answers?”*

Henry Kissinger



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Preparation

*“Everything you bring to the interview will be better than *anything* you make up after you hear the questions.”*

Consider:

- Points you want to make
- Topics you want to cover
- Information for the record
- Anecdotes/illustrations



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You Are the Message!

Facts provide information;
emotions and energy
provide interpretation.

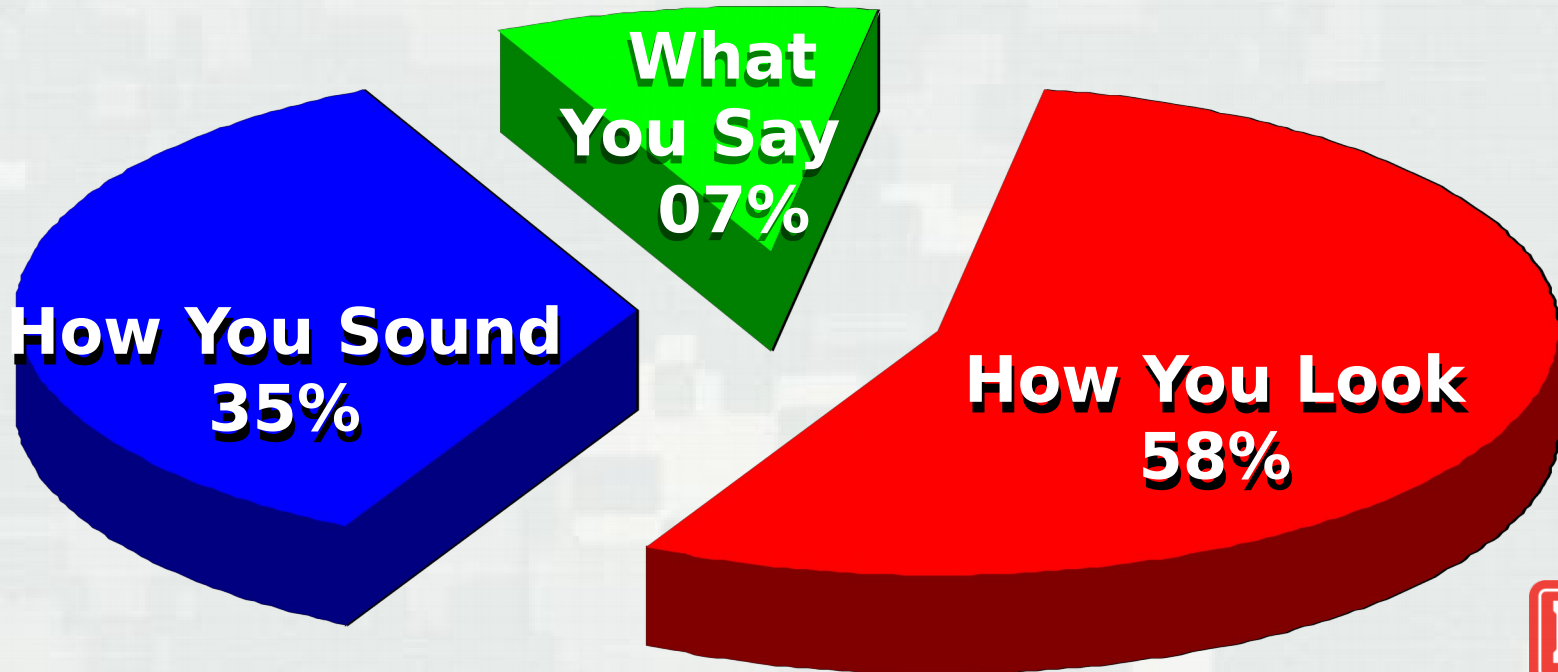


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Perception is reality

Television audiences arrive at a conclusion about you from:



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Know your key messages.



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Key Messages

Single, overriding communications objective

Consider:

“Our first priority is to protect people and property...”

“We have to be good stewards of our taxpayer’s dollars...”

“We seek to balance human development with environmental sustainability..”



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Iraq Reconstruction

Core Message

- making great progress in providing essential services to improve the quality of life for the Iraqi people.

Supporting Messages

- 75% have 2x's electricity
- 2.6M people – clean water
- 3M gallons of oil/day



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Iraq Reconstruction

The message comes alive...



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You're in control!



*"The questions don't do the damage.
Only the answers do."*

Sam Donaldson



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Interview Techniques

Bridging – no matter the interviewer's question, bring it back to your key message

Consider:

“Yes, we’re concerned about that, but here’s how we plan to address it...”

“I’m not familiar with that, but what I do know is...”

“...and another thing I should point out is...”



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Interview Techniques

Flagging – alert the interviewer that what you’re about to say is important

Consider:

“What’s important to remember is... ”

“I want to make sure you understand that... ”

“Let me put that into perspective... ”



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Interview Techniques

Hooking – end your answer in a way that prompts a question you would like asked

Consider:

“I believe these new measures will work...”

“We’re excited by the results of the study...”

“There are some important conclusions made from the research...”

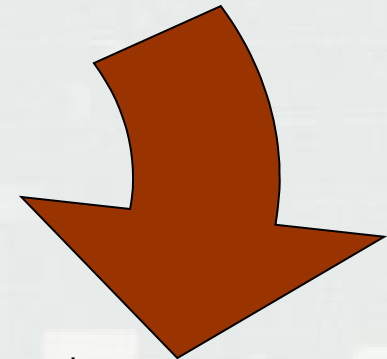
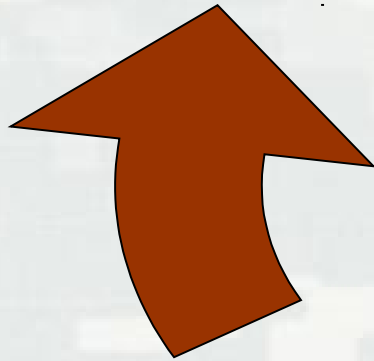


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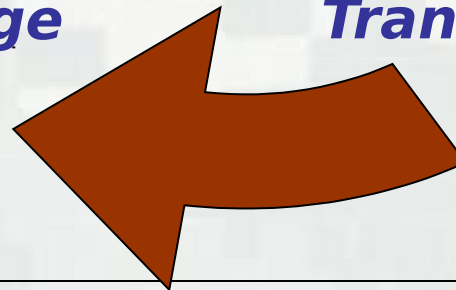
Reporter's Question

Your Response



Your Message

Transitioning Phrase



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Interview Basics

- Good communicators are good listeners
- Relate answers to audience
- Speak plainly and conversationally
- Buy time – engage brain before speaking
- Listen for negatives – don't repeat them
- Never assume understanding – educate
- Never criticize other agencies



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Interview Basics

- Eye contact – conveys confidence
- Hands – illustrate with small gestures
- Stand best – sit forward
- Facial expressions – tell a story
- Control – check emotions/stay calm
- Fumble - start sentence over
- KISS – “keep it short and simple”



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Questions?



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